the Link — the McGill Daily

Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec

Joint Special Issue
Wednesday, December 13, 1989

McGill University
Montreal, Quebec

In the wake of last Wednesday's massacre, some members of Montréal's student press agreed it would be fitting to collaborate on a joint issue. Students from UQAM, McGill and Concordia have come together to put their thoughts and feelings on paper.

The staff of Continuum, the student newspaper at Universite de Montréal, refused to participate. They felt we were capitalizing on the tragedy.

Their reaction is understandable, given the barrage of media attention the students at the Université de Montréal have had to endure along with their loss. But a silent memorial is not the only way to respond to this horrifying event.

We defy the assumption that the mainstream media has said it all, that there is nothing left to add. The student press, especially insofar as it expresses the feminist viewpoint, must not be denied a voice in the discussion of what took place a week ago today. Our perspective is directly relevant to the incident.

The presence of women at universities is a direct result of an on–going revolution that is freeing women from their traditional confines. The fact that we are on these campuses — studying, working and simultaneously redefining the given power structure and "social fabric" — is a manifestation of the shift in the status of women that has left so many men violently maladjusted.

In the following pages there will be no reference to "daughters" or "fathers", the archaic adult/child analogy that pervades media coverage. This is a discussion about and amongst equals. If "professionals" and "experts" cannot free themselves of paternalistic attitudes, we at least can avoid that pitfall.

Nor will this paper express any doubt as to whether or not this event was an expression of the misogyny in our society. It was.

The roots of psychosis may be mysterious, but the fact that Lépine aimed his gun at women, at "feminists" is neither inexplicable, surprising nor unique.

And the answer to the question "Why?", which so many seem to be asking so innocently at this stage, is unspeakably obvious. The focus for his hatred and violence was provided for him by the sexist institutions that educate, employ and entertain us.

Finally, we question the nature of the public's outrage. If the people slaughtered had been fourteen prostitutes, or fourteen lesbians, or any other "marginalized" sector, the shock we have witnessed would have been muted. Their deaths would have been seen as an unfortunate but unsurprising end to their 'unsavory' lifestyles.

When at least ten Native women in B.C. were killed by one man in 1988, no prime minister attended their funerals. Forty-eight prostitutes have been methodically butchered in the Green River killings in Seattle over the past several years, but no press conferences have been convened — certainly there were no shots of the mayor with tears in his eyes.

How many times have the 14 women killed last week been referred to as the elite of the country? These women have been eulogized as the country's future, a national treasure. But the true value of their lives has nothing to do with their potential as producers.

These deaths are equal to but not more important than the violence directed at women of all races and classes, at all times. We are giving them special attention because they happened here, to our peers. But until our rage is directed equally at all such events, we cannot be said to have understood the problem, nor to have begun to solve it.

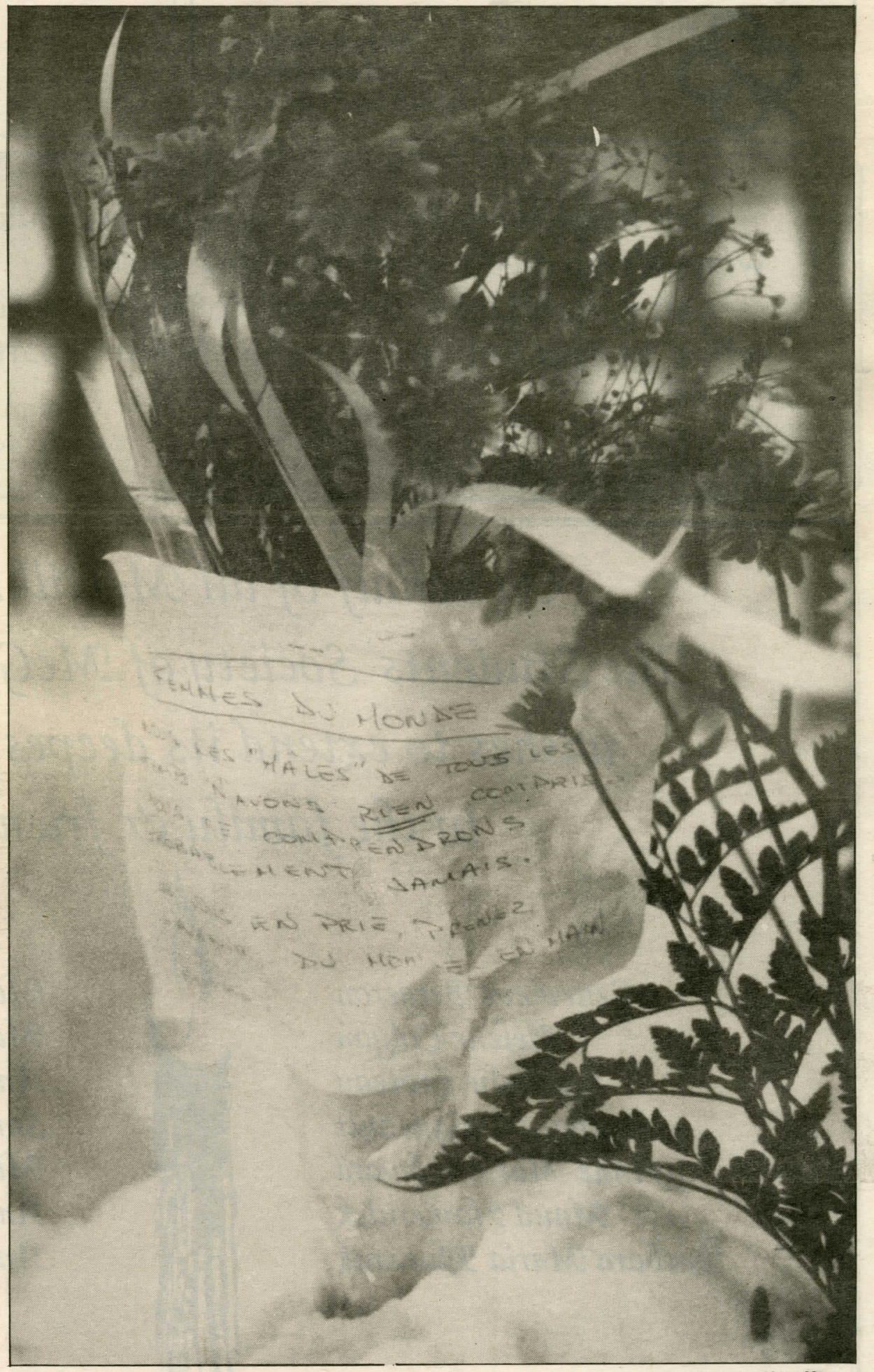


photo by Kate Kung

As the Concordia University Students' Association, we wish to extend our sympathies to the victims, the friends, and the families of those involved in the massacre at the Ecole Polytechnique last week.

No students should be intimidated or afraid to study the subject that they wish to study, especially now. We owe it to the slain women to pursue our dreams and fight any attitude, individual or institution that tries to tell us that our goals are impossible, unconventional or against nature.

Melodie Sullivan
Shawn O'Hara
CUSA Co-Presidents

SALVE REGINA

AD TE	TO THEE
CLAMAMUS	WE CRY
EXULES	EXILDE
FILII	THE CHILD
EVAE	OF EVE
AD TE	TO THEE
SUSPIRAMUS	WE SIGHE
GEMENTES	WEPING

UPON LOSING MEMBERS
OF U OF M

From the members of CASE
(Concordia Association of English Students)

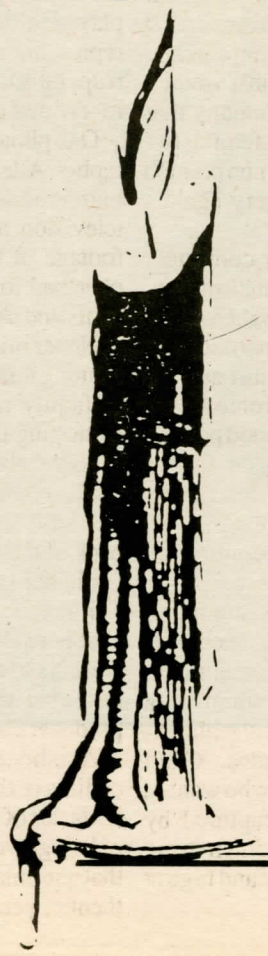
Our deepest condolences to the relatives and friends of the fourteen women who died in pursuit of their dreams.

Our sympathies to the family of Anne-Marie Edward in particular, whose brother Jimmy is a student in our department.

Communication Studies,
Concordia University.

On behalf of all McGill students
The Students' Society of McGill University
wishes to extend its deepest sympathy
to the family & friends of

Genevieve Bergeron
Hélène Colgan
Nathalie Croteau
Barbara Daigneault
Anne-Marie Edward
Maud Haviernick
Barbara Maria Klucznik



Maryse Laganiere
Maryse Leclair
Anne-Marie Lemay
Sonia Pelletier
Michèle Richard
Annie St-Arneault
Annie Turcotte

Media coverage:

Stranger than fiction

by Danielle Comeau

photo by Barbara Davidson

Dressed in a lumberjack coat and baseball cap, the dark figure stalks up the hill to the main campus building. Driven by forces beyond his control (a bad childhood, rejection by women, failure in life...you get the picture) he goes on a deliberate and calculated killing rampage, hunting down young women in a celebrated technical college. After killing 14 women, he turns the gun on himself and blows his head off. Anyone near a radio, television or newspaper in the past week knows this is not the latest plot to another slasher B movie. The murders are real.

But their meanings shift significantly when re–told by the media.

We try to make sense of events in our everyday lives through what Raymond Williams calls "structures of feeling". Everything, from media reporting to everyday conversations, is structured by narrative and imagery. Events have a beginning, middle, and end, and this sense of closure, the feeling that things have been neatly tied up and explained, gives form to chaos.

The media's response to the brutal murder of 14 young women at L'Ecole Polytechnique falls into this trap. Continually re–telling the story, point by painstaking point, structures it in a way people can easily identify with. We are all quite familiar with the Horror genre of narrative.

The murders threaten established patterns of thinking about the place of women in our culture, the dominant view of a liberal society which believes in fairness and equality.

It is unthinkable to many that Marc Lépine's murderous rampage is the logical, albeit extreme, manifestation of deeply ingrained sexist discourses in our culture. This is why Lépine must become a monstrous creature in order for us to make meaning of the situation. As a Freddie Kruger type, he becomes simple and understandable. "BASTARD", as the *Daily News* cover headline screamed out. Rather then systemic sexism, which our culture as a whole is responsible for maintaining, the murders become the product of a single deranged mind.

"The construction of the monstrous is a way of explaining all ills, rather as a child will say Mr. Nobody spilt the milk," writes cultural critic Judith Williamson. "It mitigates against the systemic nature of problems, focusing blame instead on a particular scapegoat."

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On Wednesday evening, the night of the murders, the media was already busy framing the tragedy in the terms of a Horror film. The unresolved enigma, "Who did it?", was answered the next day at a highly-charged televised press conference.

Television, radio, and print news media moved at a frenzied pace to find biographical material about Lépine. The question soon became, "Why?" as journalists and commentators searched for the "key" to why Lépine murdered the women. Last Sunday's *Gazette* feature was simply entitled, "WHY?" in huge three-inch high type.

As in Horror films, where expert opinion/knowledge is sought to find out how to kill the monster (i.e. wooden stakes, silver bullets, daylight, etc.), so to the media dragged in "experts" to offer their opinions. Lépine was a battered child. He changed his name from Gamil Gharbi when he was 18. He could not relate to women. He was rejected from the Armed Forces. His CEGEP psychologist remembers his sudden withdrawl from school as "strange". All this worked towards Lépine "snapping" and committing his crime.

This explanation fits easily into dominant discourses around women, gender, and sexuality. Lépine becomes an incarnation of 'evil', an absolute beyond the control of human beings. Judith Williamson differentiates good and evil from moral values such as right and wrong which are framed within human activity.

Thus, once again, it is possible for men to abdicate any responsibility for the murders because they stemmed from 'evil', something beyond their control, rather than from systemic sexism.

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The debate which emerged in Montréal media, and around the city, surrounded whether or not the murders are symptomatic of the escalation of violence against women in Canada. It seemed obvious to many that Lépine's shouts of, "You are all feminists," as he methodically shot down women pointed to a deeply premeditated savagery against women.

And yet, this point was hotly contested. Barbara Frum, moderating a panel discussion on CBC's *The Journal* the night following the massacre, was almost obnoxious in her insistence that the murders hurt and offended both men and women. Toronto-based writer and broadcaster June Callwood pointed out repeatedly Lépine's actions stem from a culture whose tolerance of jokes about rape and wife-battering reflect a deeply engrained acceptance of the rights of men to control and hurt women.

In Montréal, at the vigil that same night, feminists were called down for speaking. Nobody wanted to hear that these murders did not simply happen at the whim of a deranged mind, but were the logical manifestation of deeply held sexist attitudes. "Calm down," one man said to a woman who wanted to speak out, in an exchange captured by CBC television. As always, women were being told to be silent when anger and rage at the murders were more fitting.

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Another aspect of the Horror genre is its sexual subtext. Whether it's Freddie Kruger assaulting a nubile young co–ed, or vampires biting helpless maidens, or even the vulnerable baby-sitter being stalked in an empty house.

In every case, the very passivity and helplessness of the victims creates what Williamson calls a "frisson" in the audience. Fear is sexualized, as is the innocence of the victims.

The media accounts of the massacre played up all these elements, to the horrified yet insatiable curiosity of the audience. The premier, the mayor, even the prime minister all invocated the youth and innocence of the victims.

The gory telling of details about the massacre, complete with elaborate diagrams of the killer's progress through three floors, all played into this desire. These are all codes of representation which we often unconsciously respond to, so used are we to seeing them re–created on the screen as fictions.

One photograph, taken by *Gazette* photographer Allen McInnis, depicted one of the murdered women sprawled in a chair. CBC television also had a short piece of video footage of this same scene. The photographer had to climb on the backs of two students and shot through a crack in the curtain.

Never mind the clear lack of judgement in running this shot, if only to spare further pain in family members and friends. The truly disturbing thing about this shot is the way it is coded almost like a porn photo.

The young woman is seated in a chair, with her head and one should thrown over the back of the chair. Her long hair hangs down, while her throat is exposed and vulnerable. For anyone familiar with pornography, this shot is strangely familiar. The erotic undercurrents of this shot could not have been lost on either the photographer or the editors/producers at the *Gazette* and the CBC.

Another strong element of porngraphy's coding is the playing upon the voyeuristic fantasies of the spectator. Part of the pleasure of being a voyeur comes from the knowledge that the image you are viewing is both authentic, yet unable to return your gaze. The *Gazette* photo was taken unawares, with the curtain still visible in the frame. This only heightens, at an unconscious level, the desire of the viewer.

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What I've tried to map out, in an admittedly fragmentary manner, is a way to better understand how events become meaningful to us through the media. Despite the media's assertions of objectivity, there is nonetheless a very narrow terrain upon which meaning is created. In this case, a feminist 'reading' of the events of December 6 is not even possible within the limits mapped out by the media.

Instead, the goverment and the church took over and controlled the ideological determinants of the potential for meaning of the massacre. The funeral became a state-run affair, presided over by no less than 80 male clergy. The radical potential of mourning these women was effectively silenced as we were told by Cardinal Gregoire that the murders were "an act of God", thus beyond the control and responsibility of men.

CFCF and Tele-Metropole win the prize for obnoxious colour commentary during the funeral broadcast. One almost got the feeling we were watching a sporting event, with non-stop play by play.

Another problem with the coverage was the constant cuts to close ups of grieving family. This incredible invasion of private grief makes for great television. The only really moving parts of the funeral were the moments of complete silence, and the two brief readings by women students. It is amazing that in the more than two hour long service, in honour of 14 students murdered because they were women, only two women spoke.

When one looks at the context which framed the funeral — 80 male clergy presiding, mostly men speaking, male dignitaries in the front pews — it is obvious what is happening on the terrain of meaning making. Close up of Cardinal Gregoire. Cut to a close up of Brian Mulroney. Cut to a slow zoom into one of the caskets. In a very real way, through the manipulation of representation, the massacre of these women has been colonized by patriarchal institutions.

Taking power to the streets

by Joyce Lombardi

Journalist Kate Dunn complained in Saturday's *Gazette* about a "foreign-looking" man harassing her mercilessly on the bus to work. She ignored him. With the massacre fresh in her mind, she felt only fear.

As I read this with the massacre fresh in my mind, I felt only anger. What stopped Dunn from turning around and unleashing her fury on the aggressor? What stops so many women from defending themselves on the streets?

Fear. We have always been told to ignore the stares, remarks, threats, gropes that are thrust upon us in public. We obediently fall silent, believing either that it's not worth the effort to challenge the bastards, or that the consequences will be worse if we do. Wrong.

Silence is not a form of passive resistance in the daily gender war, it is passive acceptance. It is complicity.

The concept of silence is enshrined in North American culture as public and private decorum. Loudness is rudeness. Talking back is disobedience.

Women were silenced at Thursay's candlelight vigil for the victims. "Have some respect for the dead," they shouted at us, cleverly twisting our breach of sacred silence into an act of blasphemy against our own sisters. We do have respect for the dead, only we chose to express it verbally. I wanted to scream, wail, sing—anything but conform to the oppressive silence that has always muffled our rage. Yet I shut up, feeling suffocated.

It is this very silence that allows the media, legislators, and our incredulous male (and even female) friends to deny the global war against women. Violence against women is the most pervasive and hidden form of violence in the world, yet very few people seem to know about it.

And it is this very silence that convinces the Man in the street he has unlimited authority over me.

Therefore I must explain calmly to the leering gent I do not find his attentions flattering. If he persists, even after repeated warnings, I simply punch him. The reactions I get range from "you little bitch!" to men actually fleeing from me, screaming "Help! She's crazy!" Not once have they hit me back.

I realize I've been lucky— it is quite likely that some asshole will pull a knife or gun on me one day. But I'm under this risk anyway, whether I "provoke" him or not. The fact that I am female is provocation enough. But no man ever expects a woman to fight back. Many are surprised and even apologetic when I do. Others react with sheer hatred.

Some women argue attention on the street can be flattering and non–aggressive. While a rare man may sincerely find a woman beautiful, and feel compelled to tell her so, he knows he has the power to comment on the physical appearance of a perfect stranger, rendering her body public property. The act of objectification represents power abuse despite the best intentions.

And the rapidity with which men's compliments turn to curses when we suggest his attentions are unwelcome proves his compliments were curses in the first place.

No, boy—bashing isn't the most effective strategy for sensitizing and challenging male power, but any act of fighting back is empowering. When I see the look of fear on those men's faces, I realize I have power. He realizes I have power. I like to think that my actions will make him think twice before he harasses the next woman. I also like to think that she'll react with as much firm anger as I do. But it frustrates me that she usually doesn't.

While I realize that violence begets violence, passivity also begets violence. Yes, I detest the Rambo mentality that rules the world, but I also detest the flower child mentality that allows it. Many women are reluctant to fight back because they don't want to perpetuate a male—created violent society. Men are violent, women are pacific. As long as this mentality prevents women from defending themselves, we will be victims. Women don't have to attack unsuspecting men on the streets—that's violence. But just saying No to harrassment, that's self–defense. As Malcolm X said, sel-defense is not violence, it is intelligence.

The war against women is launched on numerous fronts, public and private, domestic and institutional. We must defend ourselves on every front. The easiest place to begin is on the street, a sort of self—empowerment training ground for larger political battles. Women, take your power. Don't wait for men to develop a conciousness and stop violence. It is our ultimate responsibility to stop violence against ourselves.

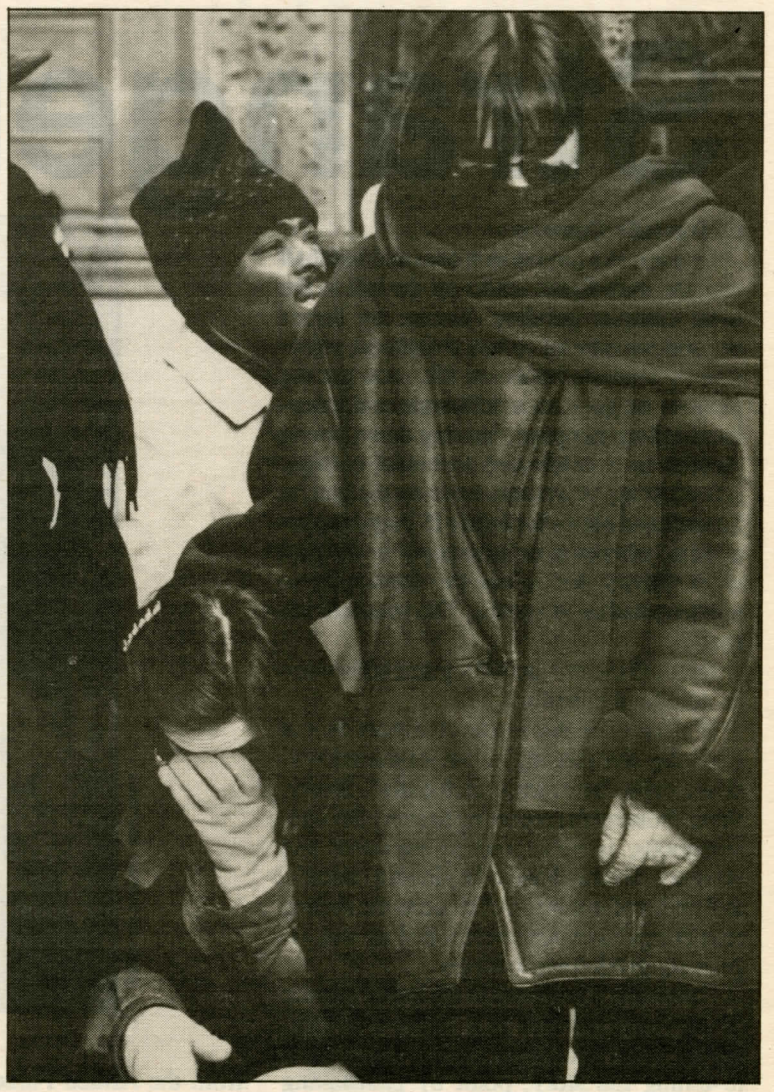

photo by Barbara Davidson

Quand les femmes seront sans peur...

C'est avec consternation que tout le Québec a pris connaissance de la sinistre nouvelle. Pas une femme n'a pu rester indifférente devant un acte d'une telle sauvagerie. En tant qu'étudiantes, cet événement nous bouleverse particulièrement. On a assassiné nos consœurs, peut-être des parentes ou des amies. Aussi, le Comité femmes tient-il à exprimer ses plus profondes sympathies à ceux et celles d'entre nous qui aujourd'hui sont en deuil.

• Jusqu'où

Quatorze femmes sont exécutées à l'École Polytechnique, plusieurs autres sont blessées. Leur crime, être des femmes? Leur raison d'être exécutée : étudier dans un domaine traditionnellement réservé aux hommes?

Nous croyions (nous voulons croire, nous voulons désespérément le croire) qu'il s'agit d'un geste isolé, que l'assassin n'appartenait à aucun groupe, qu'il ne représentait aucune opinion généralisée. Mais une chose est certaine : un homme a tué des femmes. Vraisemblement, il avait posé l'équation suivante : étudiante en génie = vocation non-traditionnelle = féministe en puissance = danger.

Nous avons pleuré devant le téléviseur. À la fois d'horreur et de compassion. Puis, en tant que militantes, nous avons sangloté de rage. Jusqu'où faudra-t-il aller pour leur faire comprendre...?

•Combattons la violence faite aux femmes

De l'humour sexiste au génocide, il n'y a qu'un pas. Toute mysoginie, à petite comme à grande échelle, est une porte ouverte sur la violence. S'inscrire contre cette violence, qu'on soit un homme ou une femme, est une question de dignité humaine.

Le Comité Femmes de l'UQAM

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Woman suffers anti-feminist backlash

by Mike Orsini

The fear many women are experiencing in the wake of the U de M massacre is especially real for activist Charlene Nero, who was sexually harassed last weekend for her feminist beliefs.

Nero was approached by an angry woman-hater on a train returning from a visit with her family in Welland Ontario last Sunday.

Recognizing her face from a television news report, the man launched into an anti-feminist tirade, calling Nero and the other vocal members of the collective "a bunch of fuckin' lesbians." Nero, a member of the Concordia Women's Collective, was interviewed last week in response to the massacre.

"He said he had the prescription for what ailed feminism," said Nero, referring to what the man on the train wanted to do to her.

Nero said a conductor later threw the man out of the coach because he did not have a first class ticket. But before leaving, the man wished death on vocal feminists.

"He said 'you're the ones who deserved it,'" Nero said. "It's too bad those 14 girls got killed and not you."

Nero said Lépine and the man who harassed her are not alone in their sentiments.

Radio phone-in shows since last week's tragedy have been inundated with calls from angry men blaming women for the problems in their life.

"Marc Lépine didn't kill those 14 women," she said, "A society that tacitly approves sexism and systematically attacks women did."

"He (Lépine) was just saying what everybody else was saying all along, except he bought a gun."

Nero said this incident has left her and many other women in a vulnerable position.

"We're feeling a real sense of paralysis," said Nero, a Concordia journalism student. "A lot of us have been made to feel like we're not allowed to grieve."

Last month, Nero received a death threat from an anonymous male caller. She claims this was a response to the boycott of Upstairs launched by eight members of the collective the previous week against the popular student hang-out.

Members of the collective were tossed out of the bar for "persisting in showing affection in an offensive way," according to Upstairs owner Chris Gore.

The women insist Gore's reaction was provoked by homophobia.

"The caller said 'keep this up and you're dead,'" she said. "At first I thought it was somebody pulling some kind of a prank."

In light of the recent massacre, that "once harmless" threat has become a "concrete warning" to vocal women's groups, she said.

"If someone is going to kill feminists, I don't think there has been anybody in the community who has been more visible than us," she said. "We look like a very radical political group."

Apart from the Upstairs incident, the collective has also been actively involved in the reinstatement of the Coors boycott at Concordia.

It also has pushed for the Crown to reopen the case of the alleged gang-rape of a female McGill student by members of the Zeta Psi fraternity last year.

Nero admitted she's afraid but said women must not abandon the struggle.

Attacks like this are an attempt to silence women," she said. "But if we retreat into our shells because we are terrified, things are only going to get worse."

At last Thursday's Université de Montréal vigil, feminist speakers were met with loud jeers from many of the men.

"Shut the fuck up," shouted one man as Nero began what was to be a very short speech decrying crimes against women.

Carolyn Gammon, a member of Concordia's Lesbian Studies Coalition, said her group has also been targeted by misogynists. She said the coalition recently received hate mail from men "calling us foul-mouthed idiots."

"Many people see lesbianism as the quintessential way of being anti-Man," Gammon said.

Get out of your ivory tower!

by Max Wallace

At roughly the same time Wednesday as Marc Lépine was committing his murders, El Salvadoran government airplanes carried out a bombing raid, killing many innocent civilians.

The U of M massacre received several thousand column inches of newspaper coverage. The El Salvador attack received a little less than two inches in *the Gazette* *The Link* and *the Daily* are putting out a special issue on the massacre. No special issue has ever been devoted to the memories of the 50,000 Salvadoran civilians murdered by their government in the last ten years.

"This tragedy is closer to home," say the media. Is it?

The engines in the Salvadoran bombers were manufactured by Pratt and Whitney, a company which holds military contracts with some of the most repressive regimes in the world. This is a tradition which goes back many years, including the years between 1939-1945, when the company did considerable business with Nazi Germany.

But Pratt and Whitney doesn't limit its dealings to right wing dictatorships. It is no less cosy with McGill and Concordia universities, which have courted and accepted hundreds of thousands of dollars in contributions from the company in the last five years.

While the heads of both universities fall all over themselves "trying to make sense of this tragedy", they should look no further than their own research offices.

According to federal government statistics, McGill is currently engaged in about a half million dollars worth of military research while Concordia's figure is just under $250,000.

Several years ago, Concordia students voted in a referendum to declare their university a military free zone and forbid military research and recruiting on campus. The administration ignored their vote.

Campaigning for the freeze, students charged that the militarization of society is linked with violence in all forms including violence against women and violence against minorities.

Now we learn that Marc Lépine's greatest passion was war movies. But instead of exploring the roots, we rush to attack the symptoms.

The media and the politicians have quickly jumped on the gun control bandwagon. Keep the guns out of the hands of fanatics and this kind of thing can't happen, they say. Should we instead strive to send guns to highly trained armies who daily commit massacres far more grisly than last Wednesday's?

At the memorial service Sunday, Mayor Jean Doré offered these words: "We should look at the kinds of values we are giving our kids."

This from the man who recently lobbied for the expansion of a military production facility into one of the city's few protected green zones to fulfill a contract for a foreign army. This from the man who for years has actively courted military industry to Montreal, which already houses nearly half of all Canadian weapons plants.

"It will create jobs and a strong economy," Dore explains, defending his decision to disregard a 1986 MCM policy opposing the establishment of new military industry in Montreal. How many jobs are created at the plant which manufactured Marc Lépine's semi-automatic rifle?

The failure of the media, the sociologists, the criminologists, the politicians and even this special edition of the *Link/ Daily*, in analyzing last week's tragedy, is a failure to come down from their ivory tower and account for the views of the majority of society, the ones who aren't politically aware, university-educated or "enlightened".

Mourir d'être femme

Quatorze étudiantes ont perdu la vie la semaine dernière, assassinées par un homme passionné de la guerre et épris de haine envers les féministes. Quatorze femmes ont payé de leur vie leur désir de se réaliser pleinement. Suite à une telle tragédie, des émotions s'entremêlent dans mon esprit; profonde tristesse, désarroi, peur et ... colère!

Colère parce qu'il aura fallu une tragédie sans précédent pour que le voile sur la violence faite aux femmes soit levé. Colère parce que nos politiciens refusent encore de regarder la réalité en face. Un geste malheureux et isolé..., et pourquoi pas une catastrophe naturelle tant qu'à y être? On cherche à étouffer l'affaire, c'est triste et c'est tout. Et que devons nous faire? Peut-être attendre une autre tuerie du genre? À combien de « gestes isolés » chiffre-t-on un problème de société? Quoi, M. Bourassa, il n'y aurait pas encore assez de femmes assassinées, battues, violées, harcelées? Bof, c'est la vie... semble-t-on nous répondre.

Non, la violence faite aux femmes n'est pas « la vie », ce n'est pas un phénomène « normal » qui fait partie des hauts et des bas de notre société. C'est une réalité sur laquelle socialement il est très possible d'agir et c'est en ce sens que les féministes agissent et revendiquent. Des femmes se regroupent pour gagner une égalité totale, sans peur et sans mépris. Je fais partie de ces « créatures » que la société considère étranges, marginales et menaçantes qu'on nomme plus simplement féministes. Je fais partie de celles qui sont en deuil parce qu'elles sont des femmes. Je fais partie de celles qui se demandent à quand le jour où les femmes seront sans peur...

Josette Côté

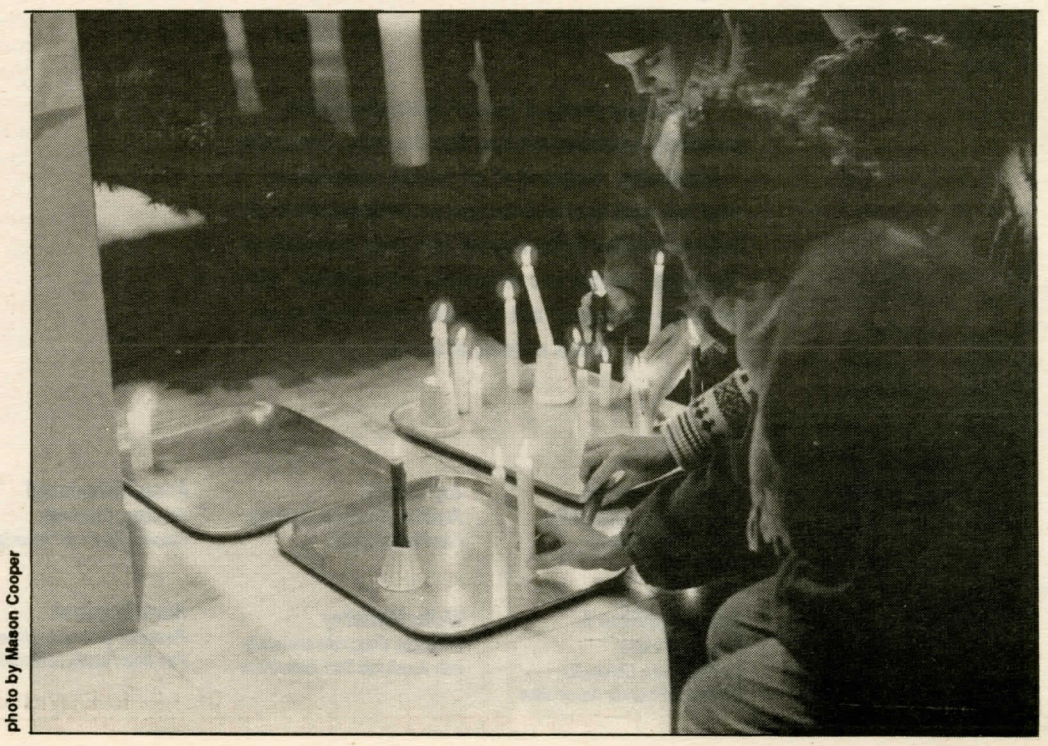

photo by Mason Cooper

Media scars children

by Suzanne Diamond

The tragic massacre of December 6th is symbolic of the turbulent state of the collective unconscious of our society.

The flood of perverse messages reaching the millions today through mass media have their subtle and not so subtle influences on the world. It's not so surprising to hear that a mock massacre of women had appeared on French TV a few days before the tragedy.

The whole fabric of our society, as brought to us by television, is based on violence and corruption. "Boys are brought up to think that it's OK to use another man's daughter for his bodily urges" as one male *CBC Radio Noon* phone-in caller pointed out the day after. "Women are blatently presented to the younger generations as sex objects," another caller added. "These extreme acts are mere indicators of the sickness of our society, but the underlying reality is the even scarier fact".

Anyone who doubts a connection just has to look at the stark reality that one out of three women will be raped during their lifetime... This says nothing of the violence and discrimination to be endured.

Unfortunately, the subconscious mind is largely ignored by our culture, so that all impressions received by people throughout life remain lurking, unconfronted, in the dark corners of the mind.

A society which has turned away from any real moral and spiritual training is quick to leave its children open to the sexist, violent and inhumane media. The insidious messages being received by the majority of kids today point to a future which we can all fear.

Children are not being brought up to value love, honor, integrity and understanding. Instead they are being led to believe by our mass media that to get love you need sex. They are being taught that all women should be looked upon as sex objects while people should achieve happiness through wealth and empires of greed.

The media tells us that sports are not for fun. They are for the purpose of winning so that makes it OK to cheat with hormones. The media also brainwashes us into thinking that for things to be acceptable they must *look* perfect. It consequently becomes acceptable to use damaging beauty products and make-up, and dangerous pesticides on our lawns and foods even though in the long term they do more harm than good.

A holistic education is what is needed to avoid the pain and results of something like Wednesday's nightmare. Childhood scars, left by real life trauma, or subtly by TV, instead of being dealt with by our society, are ignored and left to fester — with unpredictable and usually disastrous results.

With barely any government funding for the needed recovery programs, the future looks bleak. These programs, such as co-counselling, primal therapy and other internalized distress recovery techniques, do exist and can help prevent such hellish occurrences as took place last week, and the more pervasive root problems. Co-counselling, for instance, is based on the simple principals of caring and support through interaction with a counsellor; like this it *is* possible to comes to terms with a trauma of the past, but not by forgetting them.

Our times have imposed great pressures on the individual — for many, fear, hopelessness and vulnerability are pressing realities. As human numbers are reaching their breaking point on the globe, so too is our ability to handle the responsibilities thrust on us by a deteriorating world. With the faults of today's methods of raising children, the point of no return is creeping up on us.

The important issues of the day, which the children of tomorrow will have to face can only be overcome with co-operation, between people and between organizations. Tragically, our society does not value meditation for finding the peace within and puts no attention on the vast potential of the uncharted regions of the mind. Instead, educators focus only on the external world. As we let this mistake continue, we leave the future with unstable foundations.

Different cultures have different ways of appeasing the subconscious forces — like dancing around a campfire, singing and praying. But in our day, little of this is widely encouraged. Children are left with few accessible means of venting the more mystical aspects of their being, or of healing the deep wounds wrought on them by this world...

Shattered dreams

by Sandra Hewton

I once knew a woman who dreamed of owning a farm by the sea; green pastures, livestock, organic gardens of wildflowers and vegetables. She once thought that she could choose how to attain that dream.

To have a career of her choosing, retire when she was ready, get thaat bank loan, invest in her future, the future of the land which she owned and the welfare of the animals that shared that land with her. To work the acres with her hands, to plow the crops, to have a small house always filled with fresh flowers from her garden and to enjoy each season as it came and went. And part of this dream was to share it with someone whom she loved.

Those shattered dreams once belonged to me.

I never asked to be born a woman, but I never wanted to be anything else. I grew up through the post war fifties, the drugged out sixties, the sexist seventies and now, I and every other woman who had a dream wonders when the pain of December 6th will ever go away.

Fourteen women were murdered because they say we have dreams. I have a twin brother. He married his high school sweetheart. They have a son, a house in the suburbs of Toronto and a seemingly secure future of their choosing. He and his wife freely choose their lifestyle and along with it a set of values, aspirations and hopes. Because I am a woman, I will never have that same free choice to choose the way I wish to live my life. I will never have the same hour as he. We shared the same parents, ate the same food, attended the same schools, watched the same television and shared many of the same dreams.

My dreams are different now. It is not because they have changed but because I realize the battle to attain those dreams will never end, and to hold onto my aspirations will take even a bigger fight. They say that I should blame society, yet who runs this so-called civilized world of ours? I have no one to blame except myself if I do not succeed, for the battle is truly only beginning.

As a wise old Native Indian woman once said, "Man cannot live without animals but, animals can live without man." Man cannot live without women but I have managed to live the vast majority of my life without men. Women are the life givers and nurturers. The gender of man is destroying this planet. Perhaps it is the gender of women that will save it.

Concordia
UNIVERSITY

The tragic events at École Polytechnique have profoundly saddened and horrified the entire Concordia community. On behalf of our faculty, students and staff, we wish to extend our sincere condolences to all of those affected by the tragedy, and most especially to the family, friends and colleagues of the victims. We offer our full support and encouragement to all of you in this moment of sorrow.

Dr. Patrick Kenniff
Rector and Vice-Chancellor

Dr. M.N.S. Swamy
Dean, Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science

Joy Bennett
President, Concordia University Faculty Association

Ansar Mohammad
President, Concordia Graduate Students' Association

Dawn Wiseman
President, Engineering and Computer Science Students' Association

Melodie Sullivan & Shawn O'Hara
Co-Presidents, Concordia University Students' Association

Walter Wheatley
President, Concordia University Non-Academic Staff Association

Ritva Seppanen
President, Concordia University Part-time Faculty Association

RALLY FOR WOMEN ONLY
WEDNESDAY, DEC. 13TH at 7 PM
Union Francaise, 429 Viger Est (Metro Champ de Mars)

McGill Student Services

We are all deeply distressed by the horrific incident experienced at Ecole Polytechnique on December 6. This senseless act against these young women specifically, and feminism generally, is a poignant reminder of just how much remains to be done for women in our society.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to all those who were touched personally by this tragedy.

Violence against women has many precedents at universities

Women targetted on campuses

by carl wilson

Marc Lépine was an outsider at l'Ecole Polytechnique.

But anyone familiar with recent incidences of sexism on Canadian campuses might not have been terribly surprised had Lépine been a student, or a faculty member.

Many have expressed surprise that the killings should have occured in a "sheltered" environment like a university, but violence against women has a long tradition in Canadian universities.

Carolyn Gammon of Concordia's Lesbian Studies Coalition cautioned against smugness in the ivory towers.

"Universities are classist and fairly conservative," she said. "I've met incredible prejudice and bigotry at Concordia."

Gammon pointed out that the Université de Montréal slayings cannot be isolated from "smaller" events. "It's a war of misogyny," she said, "and it's connected to all other incidents."

Montréalers will recall the events of last year, when a woman alleged she was gang–raped at a party hosted by McGill fraternity Zeta Psi.

A publication ban on details of the case was recently renewed, and no criminal charges have been laid. This forced the victim to launch a civil suit against her alleged aggressors as a last resort to a justice system that failed her.

One can only imagine how many women were raped, assaulted or threatened on Canadian campuses this year and said nothing. Ninety per cent of rapes and, likely, almost all sexual harassment cases in society still go unreported, according to the National Organization of Women.

School administrations often discourage the dissemination of information, afraid of copycat crime — and bad publicity.

Even the McGill administration's Senate Committee on Women, which has an official sub-committee on safety, is unable to get access to information on campus sexual assault.

"We've been trying to get those statistics for two years. Security must have their reasons for witholding them, but I don't know what they are," Rhonda Amsel, chair of the sub-committee said.

"I strongly agree that information on safety should be widely available to students," shesaid.

After two women were sexually assaulted at knifepoint in a Vanier College washroom last January, employees received a memo telling them to keep it quiet, according to Vanier security head Jean–Pierre Barbeau.

Similarly, warning signs in the University of Toronto's women's locker rooms mention the danger of theft but not assault, despite an assault last Victoria Day weekend and two other occasions last summer when attacks were narrowly averted.

Sarah Asmussen at Wilfred Laurier University in Waterloo embarked on her own information campaign last year after administrators refused to publicize her attack in a WLU parking lot.

VIOLENCE CONTINUES

This fall, while women in Antigonish, Nova Scotia participated in a *Take Back the Night* march to protest violence against women, a student was sexually assaulted outside the nearby St. Francis Xavier University residences.

The woman escaped without serious injury, but as Katherine Reed, executive director of the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre, said "that doesn't mean the crime has been lessened."

In early October, other attacks took place at the University of Victoria, in British Columbia. Two women were assaulted within five days of each other. But the university administration took no action to improve campus security.

Shannon McAleese of the UVic Women's Centre said meetings between the Centre and the administration resulted only in "hot air and no action." Lighting levels, night patrol staff and com-munication bet-ween students and campus security remain poor, she said.

Also this fall, first-year student Heather Reid was beaten up at a University of Toronto residence party when she tried to protect a male friend. As many as five men took part in punching and kicking her, and one threw her against a window.

"NO MEANS KICK HER IN THE TEETH"

Sexual violence on campuses does not always take a physical form. Much more com-mon is harassment, and 'pranks' whose intentions, according to the men, may or may not be malevolent but whose effects terrorize female students.

The most chilling of these events this year occurred in early November, when hundreds of residence rooms at Queen's University were adorned with signs mocking the Canadian Federation of Students' (CFS) campaign against date rape.

The CFS slogan was "No Means No." I t inspired some residents at the Kingston, Ontario school to reply with banners and posters bearing messages like, "No means kick her in the teeth," "No means harder," and "No means dyke."

The humourless joke mushroomed until three to four hund-ed such signs appeared on residence windows and walls. The administration at Queen's ordered their removal, but refused to take disciplinary action.

"The explicit violence in those slogans is very upsetting to me," residence director Elizabeth Baugh said. "They say they're meant as jokes. It's hard as a woman to read them and find any humour."

Residence council spokesperson David Leech affirmed that council "disapproved of the signs that were up," but felt punitive action would be a negative approach to the problem. A special gender issues awareness week will be held in the residences in January.

INNOCENT FUN?

Jocelyn Cottier, co–director of the Concordia Women's Centre, regretted that such instances are not often taken seriously. "For some it's a cause for humour," she said.

"They're all contributing factors and all part of the same thing as the U de M murders," she added.

A University of Toronto men's residence was marred by sexist sign–posting this term, as well. Burwash residence at U of T's Victoria College held an "Ugly chicks are people too," party on September 29, advertised around the college.

Student Diane Zorn tried to get the posters taken down and encouraged people to boycott the festivities. "It is not a joke. It's really derogatory," she said.

But Burwash South House president Len Gambin refused to back down, and the party went ahead as scheduled.

Residence hijinx insulting to women also caused trouble at Wilfred Laurier University (WLU) in Waterloo.

A traditional 'panty raid' led to a ban on the practice by university president John Weir in late October, after a month of media coverage and a committee's decision that the university could no longer condone activities "demeaning to either gender."

But the season of sexist frolic was not yet over. The next month, a foyer was draped with a banner advertising "Women for Rent," in reference to a fund-raising 'serf-for-a-day' event in one of the women's residences.

Dean of Students Fred Nichols removed the banner after "members of the WLU community" registered their disgust, and local newspapers ran photos of the offending sign.

These events took place at a university where the student paper, *The Cord Weekly*, persisted in running a violently sexist weekly column called "Bill Needle's Biorhythm." Needle's aggressive style includes such fine flourishes as referring to women as "clitori".

The Cord is a member of Canadian University Press, whose constitution forbids the propagation of sexist, racist and heterosexist material. The editors have pledged to attempt to follow their Statement of Principles more closely, but have also promised Needle's return next term.

INSTITUTIONALIZED HARASSMENT

Campus media has also become the background for Concordia students Beverly Wray and Minty Fownes to fight the school's Engineering Students Council and its 'humour' organ, the *Rebogge*.

Last fall, Fownes and Wray wrote a letter to Concordia's *Link* newspaper to object to an offensive image in a poster for an engineering party. The Rebogge retorted with a "Special Bev and Minty Issue" in November 1988, a broadside making allegations about the two women's private lives, creating fantasized sequences involving them and including brutal insults.

The two women brought eleven Rebogge contributors before a committee that found them guilty of "discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation," in violation of the university's non-academic Code of Conduct.

The engineers appealed the de-cision. So did Wray and Fownes, who were upset because the committee had dismissed the charge of sexual harassment. But the second ruling ac-tually lessened the original sanctions levied against the offenders, and re-fused to label the incident as ha-rassment.

"Anyone who read the paper would know that it was sexual harassment," Fownes said. "You don't need a written definition to understand what it is."

The meaning of sexual harassment also posed a problem for University of Toronto part-time student Beverly Torfason. The university sexual harassment board was divided in a recent decision on her complaint against chemistry professor Richard Hummel — divided neatly along gender lines.

The committee was composed of three women and two men, so Torfason's grievance was upheld.

Hummel was accused of harassing Torfason at a school swimming pool. "He would swim beside me for four lengths," Torfason said. "He'd stare at me for two minutes. That's a long time."

Torfason is 32, and a professional engineer who takes one course per session at U of T. When the encounters with Hummel began to occur on a regular basis, she changed her swim time and, with hesitation, registered a complaint.

After a series of appeals, the board moved last week to reaffirm the original decision to ban Hummel from the pool for the next five years.

Torfason later proposed some changes to the university's sexual harassment policies and procedures. As at Concordia, the process was plagued by the general tendency to take women's fears of assault and unwanted sexual attention lightly.

with files from Canadian University Press

Our deepest condolences to the families and friends.

The women of
the Concordia
Women's Centre

The members of the office of the status of women received the news of the massacre of the fourteen young women at the Ecole Polytechnique de Montreal with horror.

We are joining our voices with the thousands of other women's voices, at Concordia and within all universities, who are crying and in mourning.

Our sympathies go to the families and friends, and also to all women and men who are under the shock of the tragedy.

Violence against women must stop.

In the spring of ideas they were, the rare spring
That breaks historic winters

F.R. Scott

The entire McGill University community extends its most profound sympathy to the family, friends and colleagues of the students who died at l'Ecole Polytechnique.

Mais elle était du monde où les plus belles choses ont le pire destin,
Et, Rose, elle a vécu ce que vivent les Roses, l'espace d'un matin.

Francois de Malherbe

Toute la communauté de l'Université McGill tient à exprimer ses plus profondes condoléances aux familles, amis et collègues des victimes de la tragédie à l'Ecole Polytechnique